

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 234949

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 234949

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BGEN, AG

SUBJECT: TENNECO NEGOTIATIONS WITH SONATRACH

REF: ALGIERS 2236

1. TENNECO WASHINGTON REP, AFTER CHECKING WITH FIRM'S HOUSTON OFFICE, REPORTS THAT COMPANY FELT NEED OF FRENCH-SPEAKING LAWYER/INTERPRETER DURING CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND ON BASIS OF RECOMMENDATION BY A HOUSTON LAW OFFICE (BAKER AND BOX) SIMPLY ASKED SONATRACH IF THE TWO MEN REFERRED TO IN REFTEL WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. COMPLICATING FACTOR MAY BE THAT TENNECO COMMUNICATED WITH SONATRACH ON THIS MATTER VIA FRANK SHULTZ WHOM THEY UNDERSTOOD WAS A SONATRACH REPRESENTATIVE. IN VIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WITH REGARD TO SONATRACH USA SHULTZ CONNECTION MAY HAVE TRIGGERED REACTION IN ALGIERS. TURNOVER IN SONATRACH USA PERSONNEL EARLTER THIS YEAR WAS NOTED TO TENNECO REP.

2. ON BASIS OF CALL FROM AFN TENNECO HAS NOW DECIDED NOT TO HIRE TWO INTERPRETERS RECOMMENDED BY LAW FIRM AND INSTEAD WILL TAKE ALONG AMERICAN LAWYER/INTERPRETER TO ASSIST IN CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS. TENNECO REP ADDED THAT HIS COMPANY WOULD NOT CONSIDER USING A MIDDLEMAN IN ALGERIA. HABIB

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